

REMARKS

Claims 4-13, 15, 30-40, 43, 51-68, 70-81 and 83-88 are withdrawn. Claims 69 and 82 are canceled. Claims 1-3, 14, 41, 42, 44 and 45 are rejected. Claims 16-29 and 46-50 are objected to.

Claims 1-3, 14, 41-42 and 44-45 are rejected under 37 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,805,338 (Janovec). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Janovec discloses a retroreflective sheeting that comprise a sealing member 24 and a microstructural retroreflector member 11 having a body portion 14 and a plurality of cube-corner elements 12 projecting from a first side 20 of the body portion. The sealing member and the microstructural member are bonded at bond lines 30. (See Figs. 1-2) The bonding of the two members creates sealed cells 17 containing air. Retroreflection occurs at the interface between cube-corner elements 12 and the air 23 passing through from above body portion 14.

In contrast, the present invention of base claim 1 features a plurality of two-sided optical components disposed along a substrate. Each side of the optical components has optical microstructures. At least a portion of one side of at least some of the optical components is air backed and the other side of the at least some of the components is substantially wetted-out by a material. (See e.g. Figs. 1-2, 7 and 12).

Janovec only has cube-corner elements on one side of the body portion, and does not teach or suggest two-sided optical components each having optical microstructures as required by claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable over Janovec. Claims 2-3 and 14 depend from claim 1 and are patentable for at least the same reasons.

Base claims 41 and 44 are rejected based on Janovec. The Examiner states that Janovec discloses disposing a plurality of two-sided optical components along a substrate.

Claim 41 requires that each component have optical microstructures on each side. As noted with respect to claim 1, Janovec does not teach or suggest two-sided optical components having optical microstructures on each side. Claim 41 is, therefore, not anticipated by Janovec. Dependent claim 42 is patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 44 requires two-sided optical components wherein substantially all of the components on one side are air-backed and the other side of substantially all of the components

is substantially wetted-out. In Janovec, the only wetted-out portions occur at the bond line 30 where the cube-corner elements 12 bond to sealing member 24. In addition, the wetted-out portion are on the same side as the air-backed portions of microstructure member 11. Thus, Janovec does not anticipate or suggest the invention of claim 44. Dependent claim 45 is patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 16-29 and 46-50 are deemed to contain allowable subject matter. Since rejected claims 1-3, 41-42 and 44-45 are considered to be patentable, the claims have not been amended by Applicants.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

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